

MINUTES OF A PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY SEPTEMBER 8TH 2025 AT 7.30PM IN HOCKHAM VILLAGE HALL

Attending; councillors Bennett, Lambert, Wiltshire, Thoams, Lloyd, Leech and Loft plus 11 members of the public.

- 1) **Apologies for absence;** District Councillor Cowen
- 2) **Declarations of interest;** Councillor Lambert as owner and landlord of the eagle and Trustee of the Woodsford Charity, Councillor Wiltshire as a trustee of the Woodsford Charity, Councillors Bennett and Loft as allotment holders and Councillor Leech as a farmer at Little Hockham.
- 3) **Requests for dispensation;** None
- 4) **Minutes of July 28th 2025** had been circulated and were unanimously approved.
- 5) **Progress Report;**
 - a) Dog fouling signs were all in place now and a new dog bin had been installed at Church Lane. The clerk would inform SERCO.
 - b) Info Board. In progress
 - c) NCC Highways report following visit organised by F Eagle. Signs for Puddledock Lane from the A1075 were considered adequate, the verge at Little Hockham Lane would be cut and added to the schedule, village parking issues were commented on Cllr Eagle would provide some signs, A1075 restricted access they were considering what to do, the bat box was available but needed to go on public land, the bus stop for Puddledock Lane would be looked into further, the trod would be priced for resurfacing and drainage was discussed in depth.
- 6) **Public Participation;** Residents of Breakwell Close voiced their concerns at the potential of properties being built behind theirs. Safe access was mentioned as well as utility, noise and privacy concerns.
It was asked if the road by the pub, could be one way.
- 7) **County and District Councillor Reports;** The clerk read a report from the district councillors. Breckland Council were preparing a submission to counter the NCC submission for a change of status re unitary authority. Three district councils were working together on this proposal. NCC were to vote to see if to appoint a mayor or not. Some villages had been having waste collection issues which were temporary issues due to staff sickness.
- 8) **Highways & Road Safety;** Cllr Thomas had three items to report, the verge at Little Hockham Lane had been sorted, a damaged sign on the A1075 had been reported and a damaged 30mph sign near the school had been reported.
- 9) **Planning;** there were discussions about a document from Breckland that suggested agreed sites to go forward in the local plan. It should be noted that this is not a decision that has been made yet as neither have housing numbers. Alma House application PL/2025/1184/HOU was discussed and comments agreed to send. The councillors would object unless the wording of the application were changed and the old barn for the residents use only. Sunny nook PL/2025/1149/FMIN was discussed. It was felt this was still overdevelopment in a conservation area with insufficient parking space. It was

suggested the plans were inaccurate regards distance from an outbuilding. There was no delivery material plan.

Comments would be put together and sent in.

Enforcement at the turkey shed site on the A1075 was discussed. Sheds had been demolished but no plans had been agreed for the rebuild that was taking place. The work had been stopped by enforcement.

- 10) **Finance;** The end of year external audit had taken place with one comment regards the asset register. It was odd that the auditors had made a comment about 23/24 figures which were plain to see. There was £24,202.43 in the bank with payments due of £193 for clerk's salary and £45.60 for Pearce and Kemp. The latter would be considered for direct debit. N power payments were expected at end September after a 7-month delay. £277.49 had been received from the bottle bank.
- 11) **Allotment's;** Cllr Bennett had investigated grants for water supply and had been advised by the lottery fund of the right application form. The clerk would ask the estate about a potential borehole. Cllr leech said he could release land with the estate's permission in 2027 for more allotments if required.
- 12) **Footpaths and Rights of Way.** Cllr Loft had walked most routes and other than the trod felt all was ok.
- 13) **Playing Field.** Cllr Lloyd explained that the Summer Show had grossed around £1300 and thanked all for their efforts. The containers were being racked and shelved. Fireworks was next up on November 8th. Volunteers would be needed. Financially the clerk reported £15589.31 in the bank with outgoings of £430 and the cash from the Summer has yet to be banked. The electricity supply was in credit by £329.35. The clerk asked for permission to instigate online banking and for approval for the playing field committee to consider a card reader for the fireworks. All agreed.
- 14) **Community Car Scheme.** A grant of £500 had been approved to cover taxi fees if a driver were unavailable. The clerk would liaise with taxi companies. David Sumbler was doing an excellent job, and the scheme was very much appreciated in the community.
- 15) **Forest Edge Court;** Nothing to report that had not already been covered.
- 16) **3 Year Plan.** The laptop deal with Currys had fallen through, the clerk would investigate more deals.
- 17) **Councillor Update's;** Cllr Bennett asked about ways to smarten up the village. This would be followed up next meeting.
- 18) **Correspondence.** A letter from the East Anglian Air Ambulance requesting funding was considered. The council had not budgeted for any donations.
- 19) **Next meeting was** Monday 13th October at 7.30pm